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Mission Statement

To provide comprehensive education, accurate information, support for sexual expression and reproductive choice, and confidential clinical services that help British Columbians enjoy healthy sexuality throughout life.

Vision Statement

Options for Sexual Health envisions a society that celebrates healthy sexuality, its diversity of expression, and a positive sexual self-image for individuals throughout life.

President's Report

Submitted by Barb Hestrin President, Provincial Board of Directors

It has been a great pleasure to serve on Opt's Board of Directors for the past 13 years, with the last two years as President. It is especially gratifying to reflect on the 39 years that I have been associated, in one way or another with this organization, and note its amazing growth and development.

In 1975, Opt had a different name, and consisted of eight clinics, mostly located in the Lower Mainland. Our Education Program included an excellent volunteer training program, and presentations for students at all grade levels of the school system. The social and political milieu did not entirely support the provision of contraception to minors without their parents' knowledge or consent, and proponents of abstinence demanded (and sometimes received) an equal amount of classroom time. We were "ahead of our time", and it is wonderful to now see, in general, a much broader acknowledgement of sexual and reproductive rights and freedoms.

There are some things that have not changed over the years. Opt's fundamental values, as they are represented in our Mission and Vision Statements, have remained constant, and our programs and services have developed into very strong reflections of those deeply ingrained beliefs. Opt has never failed to provide the very best possible clinical services and educational programs.

Situations that have not changed include our provincial school system which barely and inconsistently addresses the proven need for comprehensive sexual health education; and the ongoing challenges faced by women and families who need sexual and reproductive health services, but live in remote areas of the province.

In 2013, our Board of Directors articulated the following strategic goal: "Opt is a cohesive provincial organization comprised of governance volunteers, clinic, education, and community outreach volunteers, all of whom work with and support Opt's staff in achieving the organization's Mission".

Many of Opt's governance volunteers have been involved for decades as members of "Branch Boards", most recently in 14 of the 60 communities where Opt provides clinical services. Our Board saw a clear need to reconnect with these community partners and restructure that important part of our provincial organization. We also needed to address long-standing issues, including the fact that, according to Opt's Constitution, there is no such entity as a "Branch Board". Further, the Society Act (B.C.) is clear that the Board of Directors of a Registered Society alone bears the fiduciary responsibility for that organization. Opt's Auditors advised that we needed to address some accountability gaps in our financial system. Opt's Board of Directors and Management Team embarked on a project that we named "Forward Together", the results of which include a new name for our community partners, *Support Opt Community Groups*, with clearly defined Terms of Reference, and a vastly improved financial reporting structure.

The Canadian Federation for Sexual Health (CFSH), of which Opt is the largest affiliate, is also undertaking a major transformation. Over the past year much effort has been invested in a strategic process that will amalgamate CFSH with two of its closely allied partners, Action Canada for Population Health, and Canadians for Choice. It is anticipated that the new organization will be fully instituted before the end of 2014. Opt recognizes that this amalgamation will greatly strengthen the "national voice" regarding sexual and reproductive health, and has been supportive and engaged during this process in order to ensure that the most valued aspects of our CFSH affiliation are maintained.

Opt, along with many other organizations, faces the need to secure more diverse sources of funding. We must work to ensure that our clinical services remain relevant and sustainable. And, we must strive to address the gaps in sexual health education in this province. I am confident that our dedicated Board of Directors along with our excellent Executive Director, Jennifer Breakspear and her Management Team, will meet these challenges with determination and creativity.



Opt's Director of Education, Kristen Gilbert presenting at Hoopla! A Women's Health Carnival, presented by the Positive Women's Network, in partnership with Opt and WAVAW.

Executive Director's Report

Submitted by Jennifer Breakspear Executive Director of Options for Sexual Health

In preparation for writing this I reread my submission in last year's Annual Report. It was interesting to see the themes that have continued and the issues that have resolved.

Engagement and connection continued (as I hope it will year after year) as we connected with volunteers all over the province through Forward Together. I particularly enjoyed the opportunity to meet in person with a number of Support Opt Community Group representatives during the Kelowna Regional Conference. Unfortunately I was not able to get out to many clinic visits this past year as a family health situation restricted my travel. However, I did get to connect with many clinic staff and volunteers when I attended our Lower Mainland, Nanaimo, and Kelowna conferences.

I am sad to report that we lost a dear friend and committed Opt staff person when Debbie Haddock passed away in September. Debbie had worked at our Langley clinic for many years and she and her family also contributed countless hours of volunteer time supporting the clinic in the community. Debbie will be sorely missed both in her community and in our family.

We launched the use of OSCAR at Provincial Office for physicians' billings and appointment bookings. Starting in November we will develop a pilot project for implementation of OSCAR for electronic medical records in select clinics. For this pilot project we have enlisted the support of Project Manager Volunteers who will bring their professional expertise to the project.

Through the spring and summer we purchased and delivered new laptops to 12 of our clinics (Salt Spring, Penticton, Nakusp, Maple Ridge, Trail, Salmon Arm, Sicamous, Nelson, Nanaimo, Metrotown, Chilliwack, and Cranbrook) who had been identified as the clinics most in need (i.e. did not have a computer or the one that they had was sorely in need of replacement). In the coming year we will continue to replace and upgrade computers in our clinics with an aim to have all clinics outfitted with the technological infrastructure necessary for OSCAR. All this connectivity does not happen without some challenges, and missteps, and significant investments of time, money and resources. We have invested a fair bit of all of these elements in the past year as we modernized our Provincial Office and clinics' technology. This is a priority area so, if you are wondering where your donation dollars can make a big difference this year, please consider donating to Opt to support upgrading our technology. Any donations that we receive which contain a direction to technology upgrades will be specifically targeted to purchasing laptops for the clinics.

I am pleased that in the 2013/2014 fiscal year we continued to find efficiencies such that money saved in some areas could then be allocated into other previously underfunded areas. One such efficiency found was in our Provincial Office phone services. We are in the midst of a changeover to VoIP phones and this will result in a monthly savings of approximately \$200. Another anticipated savings source will be a less expensive audit contract with BDO Canada.

In the next few months we are undergoing a major renovation of the atrium space at Provincial Office. Once completed this will result in multi-functional space which will then be available for many of our own workshops and meetings as well as the potential to rent out the space to other not-for-profit groups on the weekends.

I continue to be exceedingly proud of everyone within the Opt community. It is through the commitment and dedication of all Opt staff, volunteers, donors, members, and partners that we strive to achieve our mission and ensure healthy sexuality for all British Columbians. Thank you for all that you do to support Opt.



Our Squamish Opt Clinic Staff and Volunteers attended the Squamish Music Festival and made sure festival attendees had condoms and lube, as well as info about Opt!

Medical Director's Report

Submitted by Dr. Marisa Collins, BIS MD MHSc CCFP FCFP Medical Director

A big part of my time as Medical Director in the past year was taken up with development and delivery of *Perspectives on Sexual Health: Opt Regional Clinical Conferences 2014.* Serving Opt's mandate to provide continuing education for Opt RNs, this educational "road show" took members of the management team to four regions of the province and included presentations from Nicole Pasquino (Professional Practice Leader), Kristen Gilbert (Director of Education) and me. Accreditation for continuing education credits for family physicians both encouraged and rewarded doctors for their participation, and physician attendance was a welcome change. Participant evaluations were very positive. Just the same, it is a tall order to deliver high quality education in an equitable fashion to Opt clinicians across the province. And, I am well aware that Opt is not alone in this challenge.

Speaking of continuing education though, May 29–30, 2015 is the date set for *Sexual Health: Across the Lifespan.* Opt and the University of British Columbia Continuing Professional Development Program are partnering to create a new conference on Sexual Health - for physicians, nurse practitioners, RNs, psychologists, counsellors and educators. Responses from invited presenters are coming in, the agenda is shaping up, and it promises to be an exciting and informative two days of learning. Check http://www.optionsforsexualhealth.org or https://www.optionsforsexualhealth.org or <a href="https://wwww.optionsfo

A few other highlights of the past year for me include recruitment and hiring of new Opt physicians; adoption of a new electronic scheduling and billing system, allowing me to pilot its potential future use for billing by other Opt physicians; challenging but ongoing investigations of the potential to deliver physician services to rural clinics and clients through video-enabled "telehealth" platform.

Experiencing Opt from both the Provincial Office and Clinic physician perspectives continually reminds me that although all of the clinics are grounded in the same principles of providing exceptional, patient-centred care in sexual health, each of Opt's clinics is unique. 2015 will mark my 15th year sharing care with the wonderful RNs at the Whistler Opt Clinic. I want to take this opportunity to thank them all for teaching me so much, and Options for Sexual Health for providing a tremendous opportunity to contribute to the community.

Clinical Services

submitted by Nicole Pasquino Professional Practice Leader

Opt Clinical Services has continued to grow and see an increased demand for its services over the last year, especially for STI services. We often hear from our clients seeking confidential sexual and reproductive health services that Opt comes highly recommended from their peers or they have seen our ads on the bus. It is an ongoing challenge to keep up with the increased demand for service without an increase in funding and while we continue to do our best to see as many patients as possible within our current hours and staffing abilities, our clinicians are often faced with turning clients away or clients face long wait times to receive services (ranging from two weeks to six weeks). Over the last fiscal year Opt saw almost 26,000 patients across our clinics in BC. Over the past three years, we have seen a significant increase in male-identified clients, demands for Intrauterine Contraception insertion services, and STI/Cervical Screening services. Please refer to our infographic for more information.

In order to continue to meet the needs of our clients and remain at the forefront of sexual and reproductive health care, much effort has been contributed to ensure our staff and clinicians have adequate opportunity for training and professional development. Over the spring of 2014, Opt continued with its annual regional conferences in four regions across BC to provide important education in regards to changing practice and trends in sexual health care.

Changes to the structure of the Clinical Management were made in June in order to meet the increasing needs of our clinics both on a practice and operational level. The Director of Nursing position (which was previously responsible for all clinical operations as well as practice needs) was revamped into two separate positions in order to be able to better support the practice needs of clinicians and also the day to day operations of the clinics. Nicole Pasquino assumed the new position of Provincial Professional Practice Leader (focusing on clinical practice) and Julie Norton joined Opt as our Clinical Operations Manager to dedicate a greater focus on clinic operations and maximizing efficiencies in the day to day operations of the clinics.

Opt's clinical department continues to forge partnerships with outside organizations to ensure sexual and reproductive health care is at the highest standard in the province of BC. Opt's Professional Practice Leader continues to work with BCIT to deliver a high standard of education to RNs seeking Certified Practice Registration in reproductive health. Opt also sits on several other provincial practice committees including the College of Registered Nurses of BC provincial working groups for STI and Contraceptive Care standards, Interior Health's Youth Sexual and Reproductive Health Committee and continues its long standing partnership with Northern Health in order to deliver exception sexual and reproductive health care across the North. Opt clinics continue to have an incredible pool of dedicated volunteers, staff and clinician who provide exceptional front line care and ensure Opt remains a leader in sexual and reproductive health care in BC. Opt could not provide such exceptional care without this amazing group of dedicated frontline volunteers and staff, thank you for you unbelievable work.



Last year we launched our updated bus advertisements. We have started seeing them in action, and they are working! Have you seen them on public transit in your community?

Financial Report

Submitted by Joan Westman deCarle Finance Director

Opt was able to maintain its financial success fiscal 2013-2014, with a surplus of \$68,100, which was \$68,000 over budget. We were also able to build up a modest reserve.

In early 2013, the Forward Together initiative was introduced to rejuvenate our community partners and rebuild Opt's provincial organizational structure, by changing some aspects of Opt's provincial former 'Branch Board' structure. This included the financial management system of our clinics. The auditor's report for 2012 – 2013 strongly advised that the 18 bank accounts then held by Opt Branch Boards be closed, and that all monies be accounted for within Opt's main accounting system. Terms of Reference and Required Procedures re/ Financial Management & Reporting were developed for the renamed Support Opt Community Groups. Over half the bank accounts are now closed - the process is still ongoing this fiscal.

Many thanks to the Kaslo, Cranbrook, Fernie, Penticton, Revelstoke, and Salt Spring Island groups, for fundraising in their communities to support their clinics, professional development and outreach.

The regional conferences began at the end of the fiscal with the Lower Mainland conference in March. Sponsorship revenue from Bayer, Merck, and Pfizer, was deferred to the next fiscal to cover the bulk of the expense for next three conferences which were held in April and May 2014.

Laptops were purchased for various clinics to increase ease of accessibility of computers in clinics. Our goal is for every clinic to have access to a computer. Opt acquired new updated software for membership and for MSP billing and booking.

Contraceptive sales in the clinics again dropped, by about 14%, compared to previous fiscal. We continue to look into other revenue streams in education and other funding.

The auditor's report continues to recommend tighter control of contraceptive inventory at the individual clinic level. They also commented on the decrease in margins on contraceptive sales and suggest being more pro-active looking at our product pricing when our supplier costs increase. Also mentioned was continuing to monitor the liability of accrued vacation.

With a surplus of almost \$50,000 at the half way point, the outlook is positive as we enter the second half of the fiscal year. The Opt staff and Board have done a great job of adhering to the budget, and utilizing the resources we currently have to strengthen the organization's financial picture.

Communications Report

Submitted by Ashleigh Turner Communications Manager

This year we have had two Communications Managers, with a small gap between one leaving and one coming back from Parental Leave. Maggie Murray was in the role for the majority of the past fiscal year, with me (Ashleigh Turner) returning from Parental Leave at the beginning of July.

This past year has been a busy one for the Communications team. Maggie was involved with several communities in the development of their grant applications, connections with local media and promotions, and continued support of their print requests. When Maggie began the position, a large portion of her time was dedicated to working with NewGen, our information technology support company, as the Opt office upgraded our technology. Maggie provided support to the Board as they began the transition from Branch Boards to Support Opt Community Groups (SOCGs). I would like to extend a big thank you to Maggie for the work she did as Communications Manager when I was on leave.

With the lapse in the Communications Manager position between April and July, there were many projects and tasks ready to be started or continued upon my return. One of the main projects I have been working on has been the Volunteer Evaluation Project with our external consultant, Alison Brewin. The project is scheduled to wrap up in November of this year, with information about the evaluation available shortly after. So far the feedback has been very positive; explicitly mentioning the importance of our dedicated volunteers!

The online volunteer training was on a temporary hiatus while I was on Parental Leave, with one session occurring last year. Kristen Gilbert, our Director of Education stepped in to facilitate the course and trained 12 keen volunteers. The Fall 2014 cohort of the training has just began, and as usual, I am impressed with the ambition and dedication this group is showing. Our volunteers are amazing!

Our IT services have gone through a major upgrade this year. We continue to work with NewGen and B'stro for our IT and web support, and appreciate their ongoing commitment to Opt. Our social media sites have seen a steady increase of followers, and our website is accessed world-wide by people looking for sexual health information.

With the continued goal of improving communications both internally and externally, I appreciate the commitment the nurses and staff have made to connect with me on their many projects, events, outreach, and promotions. Looking forward to the upcoming year, we will be making some improvements to the way Provincial Office supports clinics and communities in their outreach initiatives. I look forward to working with staff and SOCGs to promote Opt's services in new and exciting ways.

Education Report

Submitted by Kristen Gilbert Director of Education

Opt's Education department continues to blossom as we connect with new audiences, train new professionals, develop new proficiencies, and increase the scope and distance of our reach across the province.

As I write this report we are nearing the end of our 2014 Sexual Health Educator Certification (SHEC) training. Since 2006, Opt has been helping to develop educators who excel at delivering sexual health workshops to a variety of school and community audiences. This year we had a record number of applicants from as far away as Ontario and—for the first time—had to turn away more qualified applicants than we could accept. In response to this demand we are expanding our SHEC program and will be offering it in both Vancouver and Prince George in 2015. SHEC North will be the same comprehensive training program as SHEC Vancouver, but will be more accessible for students travelling from remote communities. SHEC remains the only training program of its kind in Canada, and we regularly field inquiries from prospective students around the continent.

Our Field Education work continues to be in high demand, and last year Opt educators connected with students in a variety of settings: schools, community centres, libraries, office spaces, on reserve, and in custody. Over the last year we have taught at 40 schools around the province, reaching 4840 Elementary students, and teaching more than 100 Secondary school sessions. 480 students with disabilities learned about healthy sexuality from an Opt educator, and 192 youth in custody participated in workshops about consent, safety, and how to avoid STIs and unplanned pregnancies. For the first time, we were able to start offering selected workshops in French or English—a benefit eagerly seized upon by French language schools that had been requesting this option for years.

While a classroom is the most typical venue for an Opt presentation, it is at our Askable Adult workshops where we feel some of the most acute results of our efforts. This year 260 parents and caregivers joined us to reflect on the messages they learned growing up, and whether there might be a better way to connect with the young people in their lives about sexuality. These days, students in BC are entitled to comprehensive sexual health education, but they are often going home to adults who were not lucky enough to learn the same information and positive messaging when they were young. During the Askable Adult we help participants develop the comfort and tools they need to connect with the knowledgeable young people they are raising.

Opt's expertise in training professionals was called upon frequently this year. Teachers, nurses, physicians, camp counsellors, early childhood educators, and correctional officers all benefitted from training modules designed to help professionals feel more

confident and competent while discussing sexuality with their client base. As the Director of Education I was invited to present at several professional conferences this year, the most memorable of which was speaking to forensic psychiatrists on healthy adolescent sexuality. Opt's own clinicians also benefitted from our organizational expertise when this year's annual clinical updates conference included training on sex positivity from the Education department—a collaboration between two of Opt's departments with tangible benefits for all.



The Cranbrook Family Connections building is now home to a fantastic group of organizations, including our Cranbrook Opt Clinic! All of the organizations got together on September 9th, 2014 to host an open house to showcase their new location. Linda Douglas, Cranbrook Clinic Supervisor, is third from the left.

Sex Sense Report

Submitted by Sex Sense Coordinators

In the 18th year of its existence, the Sex Sense Line experienced a significant increase in calls, as well as an unprecedented increase in email questions. Average call length has decreased very slightly. The Sex Sense Line's hours of operation remain 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., Monday to Friday for a total of 60 hours a week.

There were 9778 calls in the past year. This is an increase of 28% over last year. We had 3308 emails this year as compared to 1550 last year, a 109% increase.

Females continue to call the line more than males, at a ratio of almost 3:1. Callers between the ages of 20 to 24 made up 20% of line's users, while 25 to 29 make up 15%, and 17 to 19 made up 11%. The majority of calls were regarding contraception, pregnancy risk, sexually transmitted infections, female sexual health, and clinic information. Calls from the area of the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority accounted for 19% of all calls received on the line, compared with 26% from last year. Calls from the area within the Fraser Health Authority, the Vancouver Island Health Authority, and undefined locations made up 11%, 3%, and 51% respectively.

When callers access the Sex Sense Line from outside of British Columbia they pay long distance charges and yet we continue to receive calls from throughout Canada and the world! This year we received calls from other Canadian provinces; Alberta, Saskatchewan, Ontario, Quebec, and Nova Scotia. Other places we received calls from include the USA, India, South Africa, Trinidad Nigeria, and Papau New Guinea.

Last year saw the launch of the new Opt bus advertisement campaign. This campaign, which matched the branding of the previous year's website update, was likely a major factor in the increase in calls and emails. This year the Sex Sense Line was advertised throughout the province through bus advertisements, educators, clinics, the website, and requested mail-outs of cards and posters. The Sex Sense Line continues to ensure that the toll-free number and website is available on all brochures that Opt distributes to the public, including the clinic facts sheets. Sex Sense continues to contribute content to Opt's social media streams, including Facebook and Twitter. Sex Sense was also featured in a new Opt email newsletter.

The Sex Sense Line staff consists of registered nurses, clinical counsellors, and sexual health educators. The Sex Sense staff remain committed to professional development, and both Sex Sense coordinators as well as some supervisors attended the Opt regional conference, where they received the latest updates on contraceptive and sexual health.

The Sex Sense volunteer program had been on hiatus pending an update of materials. The volunteer training material was successfully updated in 2013, and the first new volunteer has completed training and begun working on the line.

2013-2014 Opt Award Recipients

It is not an exaggeration to say that we have outstanding staff, volunteers, and community partners. Every year, we have the distinct pleasure of recognizing some of the people who make Options for Sexual Health the robust organization that it is. Please join us in honouring this year's award recipients.

Clinic of the Year: Nakusp

Dr. Jeffrey Dolph Memorial Award: Dr. Diane Wozny, Kootenay Loop Opt Clinic

Dorothy Shaw Award: Alison Masters, Creston

Volunteer of the Year: Gee de Ruyter, Invermere

Education Award: Creston Valley Gleaners

We also have the distinction of recognizing an individual or organization who has worked in opposition of Opt's mission and vision. This year, the **Clap for the Winner Award** goes to Forty Days for Life for their continued disregard for women's reproductive rights.



Ever wonder what 20,000 condoms looks like? Our Community Outreach team could tell you! They spent countless hours packing safer sex supplies and Opt Sex Sense cards for outreach events like TeenFest, Salt Spring Pride, Squamish Music Festival, and Shambhala.

Donor Acknowledgement

Donations received in the 2013-2014 Fiscal Year

Options for Sexual Health appreciates the generous contributions of our donors. Our donors make our programs successful, increase client access to sexual health services, and help the organization work towards our mission and vision every day. Everyone at Options for Sexual Health is truly grateful to all of our donors and sponsors who have given generously to support our mission. We would also like to recognize the hard work and dedication of individuals and companies who organized and raised funds through events held on our behalf. Thank you!

Our thanks to those who donated between \$1 and \$99

Janet Ames • Sheila Balakshin • Betty Ball • Alda Blanes • E.A. Bongie • Patricia Brown • Joan Byrne • Rose Cass • Pat Chisholm • Jessica Cowen • Cathy Cronin • Maggie Crowe • Michelle Crowley • Gary Dalton • Jenn De Roo • Margo Deane • Thomas Dennett • Delores Devindisch • Anne Drader • Allen C. Eaves • Gwen Enquist • Catherine Faulkner • Elizabeth Food • E. Margaret Fulton • Beth Gessinger • Ennis Greene • Alicia Grudzinskas • Ruth Hopping • Shirley Hunter-Oglow • Darren Jukes • Jane Langton • Anne Lucas • Wendy Lymer • Patricia Martin • Katie McCallum • Gloria McEacherm • Heather McEwen • Jennifer A. McGinn • Cindi Mercer • Mission Memorial Hospital • M.P. Morgan • Sue Mouat • Christine Nguyen • Judith Norget • Carol Penhale • Lianne Raynor • Jinny Rush • Sheryl Sargent • Robbyn Scott • Jane Sinclair • Greg Smith • Shauna Speers • Rita Tweddle • Tamara Underwood • Visa • Emily Wagner • Chris and Tashia Warren • Bill Whitelaw • Elizabeth Woods •

Our thanks to those who donated between \$100 and \$499

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Our thanks to those who donated between \$500 and \$999

Maureen and Jim Bradbury • Barbara Hestrin • Michiko Kariya • Lady Minto Hospital • Lionel Investments Ltd. • Denise F. MacKean•

Our thanks to those who donated over \$1000

A. Jean Elder • Allison Lenters • Anonymous • Carmen Venturi •



In 2013-2014, our Opt clinics held events in their communities around the province with a goal of increased access to sexual health services, including pap testing and STI testing. This initiative was funded through generous grants received from Merck, Pfizer, and Bayer.